

Minutes
of the
TEMPORARY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Special Education Advisory Panel
July 21st, 2004
LBJ Building
3rd Floor Conference Room, #302
Boise, Idaho

SEAP Members Present: Beverly Benge, Chairperson; Mary Stewart, Vice Chairperson; Ross Edmunds; JoAnn Lopez-Miller; Julie Oye-Johnson; Cindy Lijewski; and Therese Clifford.

SDE Present: Jana Jones, Russ Hammond and Bonnie Steiner-Leavitt.

The meeting came to order at about 9:30 A.M. Russ informed Panel members that Beverly had joined the Bureau of Special Education as Regional Consultant in Coeur D'Alene, Idaho. Therefore, Beverly would have to resign as chairperson of the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP). He informed the Panel that Mary Stewart had agreed to move into the Chair position. He stated that we would have to fill the Vice Chair position and asked everyone present to consider volunteering to fill this position. JoAnn asked what the duties of Vice Chairperson were. Russ discussed the role of the Vice Chairperson and of the SEAP. He also gave some history about SEAP.

Russ drew everyone's attention to the Annual Performance Report (APR). Russ stated that the Bureau would like to have the Panel focus on the APR for the 2004-2005 year. The APR has five clusters. The bureau would like to ask SEAP to look at one or two clusters each meeting. He noted that the first day of the meeting could be discussion and having everyone turn in recommendations at the beginning of the meeting. Russ said that this could be done as a group or in committees. The second day could focus on the new State Improvement Grant (SIG) with APR being addressed on the second day as needed. Jana noted that the grant was written with focus around the APR. Jana stated that the whole way the Bureau functions is changing and the focus is the APR. Therefore, the panel may need to change their focus. Everyone introduced his or her self. Jana noted that SEAP had been struggling with the best way to assist the Bureau. She said that the Bureau was trying to find a way for the SEAP to be meaningful and helpful and help guide this change. Jana feels that changing the SEAP focus to the APR would be most beneficial to the Bureau. She noted that training needs might be needed by the Panel such as a presentation by Mark Friedman, data analyst or possibly some training in how to educate the legislature about SEAP and how to advocate for laws, funding, and etc.

Mary felt that the APR contained too much data. Jana asked how the Bureau could meaningfully and usefully involve the Panel? She stated that this is really important. Julie suggested just picking one cluster to work on. Mary suggested that we focus on areas w/slippage. She felt we would have more impact on those areas. Russ suggested keeping committees and having each committee focus on one Cluster.

Ross asked what product the bureau wanted from the SEAP. Jana stated that there could be task forces or subcommittees. Ross stated that in the past the year-end report to Dr. Howard was the goal and that “went all over the place”. Mary asked what the feds thought that parents could contribute. Jana said that it is critical that we have parent involvement across all areas. Ross stated that they want the power of direction be with parents as they work with this on a daily basis. Jana said that taking the APR and writing the document, as a narrative could be a project/focus.

Russ said that he heard Ross saying that the panel needed to decide what product they want and to have it more focused and not address all of the clusters.

The Committee discussed different ideas. The Committee would like to keep some of the Legislative-Policy Committee goals such as advocating for laws, attending hearing, etc. The Committee talked about lobbying for laws. Jana noted that the panel cannot lobby, but they can educate.

Mary said she would like to have the bureau tell SEAP how they could be most helpful and go from there. She asked what the Bureau wanted from SEAP in fifty words or less.

The group discussed how everyone’s personal interests would get addressed. Russ explained how this could happen. He also noted that OSEP is very flexible to change within the State Improvement Grant (SIG) and this might allow these interests to be addressed.

Jana said that what she wants is for SEAP to have a purpose and focus when this group leaves today. Jana asked Committee members for their thoughts.

JoAnn said she wants to work on things that can make a difference, create change and be beneficial to all children. Her thought is to take one cluster from the APR where there is slippage, change that and make it successful.

Ross agreed with JoAnn and thinks that if the Bureau goes through the APR and presents the areas with slippage that they would like help with, explain those areas to the Panel and ask for the Panel’s help, that the Panel would gladly assist them. He feels that the APR is impacted by what happens in Idaho. He would like to see the Panel use it’s voice to assist with this. He feels that the Panel needs to tell the legislature what is important to us as parents. He noted that the Legislative Committee could provide information on new rules coming down.

Jana said that the Bureau can keep the panel aware of “hot topics” and the panel can respond to these issues.

Ross thought the Bureau should ask the Panel for help and tell them what the Bureau needs help. He also thought the Panel should still work for advocacy in education. He noted that training might be helpful to increase the Panel’s ability to advocate for advantageous laws and rules.

Mary noted that all state and federal agencies are expected to do more with less more frequently all the time. Some things need to be funded and many times suggestions cannot be followed through without funding.

Beverly noted that the panel is not well known and that impacts the credibility the panel has.

Mary agrees with Ross that the APR needs to be streamlined. She also thought focuses should be identified, maybe overlapping with the Legislative Committee; SEAP could write letters; attend hearings, advocate for issues or rules; and possibly disseminate information to someone who can lobby for laws and rules. She noted that there was a need to summarize and streamline the APR into basics, but still hand out the entire APR to the panel. Mary feels that the Panel sometimes receives too much information to disseminate. Mary stated that the Department was probably doing very well with limited funding. She felt SEAP needs to know what the Bureau needs, wants, and expects as an end product.

Beverly thought scaling down the APR into a streamlined narrative was an excellent idea and she noted that she thought that fifty-one percent of the panel being parents/consumers allows for outside ideas also. She thinks that the Panel needs to look at the focuses and product and decide the best way to go from there.

Julie believes the Panel needs to identify the outcome first to make good use of the Panel’s time and not focus on so many things that we do not accomplish anything. She believes we need to have a focus for each meeting that is achievable. Julie believes this will strengthen the Panel. She believes these things are positive. Julie noted that the Panel needs to be realistic with its’ time.

Cindy thought choosing sub-committees for focus groups would be a good idea. During last year, she consistently found the first meeting day to be confusing. Cindy noted that she thought one day should be reserved for the Panel to visit the Legislature.

Therese is still feeling confused. She stated that she believed the focus should be on the APR, but thought it was also important to spend a specified amount of time on outside issues. She wanted to know how much time members were expected to contribute to the Panel.

Ross suggested spending the first two meetings on the APR and the third meeting on separate issues.

Russ thought putting the APR into a simple narrative would be helpful. He feels it is important to keep the SIG and the APR integrated.

Jana suggested having the APR streamlined by the first meeting and letting SEAP decide where to put the focus or the Bureau to ask for help in certain areas. She wanted to know if the Panel wants to be informed about “Hot Topics”? The Committee would like to be informed on “Hot Topics”. Jana would like to know how to assist the Panel at the first meeting.

Russ suggested informing the Panel about what the Idaho Board of Education, the Idaho Department of Education, the legislature and etc. does and how the funding for these agencies works. Jana suggested a presentation on roles, funding, and advocating for rules and laws.

Russ asked if the Panel should meet four times a year. Jana felt only if the Panel has a focus and needs extra time. Russ suggested a presentation on “What is the status of Special Education in Idaho” at the first meeting.

Julie suggested addressing something different and self-contained at each meeting.

The committee members (Mary, Ross, JoAnn, Cindy and Therese) accepted appointments as the Temporary Executive Committee for SEAP.

Ross moved to change the April 13 and 14, 2005 meeting to March 3 and 4, 2005. JoAnn seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Cindy suggested having full panel meetings and appointing sub committees as needed. Mary stated that everything does not fall under the Personnel Preparation/Human Resources Committee and Legislative-Public Policy Committee. Cindy suggested making up a Legislative Committee from one member from each sub-committee. This would also allow input from each area.

Jana stated that the first meeting structure for the September meeting should include electing a new vice chair, amending guidelines, and appointing Committee members.

Russ noted that “at large” members were eliminated when SEAP cut the size of the Panel. He acknowledged that we have good “at large” applications for membership this year. He asked if SEAP wanted to have extra parents/consumers to meet the fifty-one percent rule if “at large” members were added. Ross noted that you could have “at large” members and not give them voting rights without adding to parents/consumers. Mary thought the “at large” applications were good choices for the Panel membership.

Ross moved that we expand the panel by two “at large” positions. Mary seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Russ brought up adding a charter school representative to the panel. It was decided that according to the federal rules for the panel we must add a charter school representative. Jana will work with Dr. Marilyn Howard and Carolyn Mauer to appoint a charter school representative.

Russ brought up the Guidelines, Section D, 5 language noting that the language does not make sense as it is written. Jana suggested that SEAP write new language changes for that and the and/or for Charter School and Private School Representatives piece and have those changes ready so that the Panel can vote on changes to the Guidelines at the September 2004 meeting.

The Committee discussed the creation of a Mission Statement. Julie suggested using the SEAP Purpose from the September 2003 to help create a mission statement. The Committee decided that the September meeting would be more productive if the Executive Committee made more hard decisions today giving the Panel a good base to start off with at the September 2004 meetings.

Panel members asked about Idaho’s compliance with IDEA. Jana stated that Idaho had compliance in all aspects of IDEA with no findings.

Russ suggested reading cluster topics and indicators from the APR to help the Committee decide on focuses for the 2004-2005 school year. Bonnie read these to the Committee.

Jana noted the following areas: #1GS.IV; Cluster 2, Early Childhood, GT piece (a big issue); Cluster III (meaningful) Parent Involvement; Cluster IV Over identification for Race, drop out rates, under identification of G/T; Probe BF.IV; and Cluster V Secondary Transition. Jana suggested the following as the areas of greatest need (1) Recruitment and Retention, (2) Parent Involvement, (3) Secondary Transition and (4) monitoring the dropout rate, the graduation rate and assessment scores.

Julie moved that we replace the two existing standing committees with three focus committees on the above three issues. Cindy seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Jana suggested that the guidelines be approved first thing at the September Meeting.

The Executive Committee then went over the applications for membership and discussed these and who would be best for which opening and why.

JoAnn moved to nominate Dennis Toney for Idaho State University Representative; Regina Hoffman-Flock for the Special Education Teacher Representative and Louise Krantz for the General Education Representative. Cindy seconded the nominations. The motion passed unanimously

Cindy moved to extend an invitation of membership to Hector Deleon for the Administrator of a program for children with disabilities and Robin Greenfield and Elaine Eberharter-Maki as “at large” members. JoAnn seconded the nominations. The motion passed unanimously.

Therese nominated Beth Eloee-Reep, Dina Flores-Brewer, Barbara Rand, and Jean Coil for membership on the Panel as Parents/Consumers. JoAnn seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Russ suggested a nominating committee to come up with three names for Vice Chairperson. Beverly appointed Cindy, Julie, and Ross to be on the nominating committee.

The Committee decided that the Executive Committee will meet again in late August or early September to identify Focus Committee members, set an agenda for the September 2004 meeting, review changes to the guidelines and to review decisions with Mary. The Committee agreed to the following dates as possibilities for the next Executive Committee meeting August 26th, 2004; August 27th, 2004; or September 9th, 2004.

The Committee discussed nomination for the position of Vice Chairperson. Therese and JoAnn said they would be willing to run for chairperson in the future, but didn’t feel that they were ready to accept the position this year.

Cindy recommended that the Executive Committee nominate Julie Oye-Johnson to be Vice Chair for 2004-2005. JoAnn seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Beverly appointed JoAnn as Chair for the Parent Involvement Focus Committee, Cindy as Chair for the Secondary Transition Focus Committee and Therese as Co-chair for the Recruitment and Retention Focus Committee with a Higher Education Representative as the other Co-chair. JoAnn, Cindy and Therese accepted these appointments.

Russ and Bonnie will draft an Action Plan for the September 2004 meeting. Bonnie will e-mail it out to the Executive Committee for their approval.

Cindy moved to adjourn the meeting. Therese seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 PM. Respectfully submitted by Bonnie Steiner-Leavitt.

Bonnie Steiner-Leavitt